



Frank M. Stahl

(1841 - 1937)

Born in Darke County, Ohio, on May 23, 1841, Frank M. Stahl left home at age 15 for the West. From Ohio, he went by railroad to Jefferson City, Missouri, and by steamboat up the Missouri River to Westport Landing. Leaving Westport, he started west on foot. In March, 1857, he arrived near Auburn, KS on Six-Mile Creek, without a cent to his name. He was employed by Robert Simmerwell. Stahl later worked for two years at one of the first mills in Auburn, Kansas.

Frank crossed the plains on foot to Denver in June, 1860. He mined around Central City and Blackhawk. During the winter of 1861-62 he walked back across the plains to Kansas, taking a commission to drive six yoke of oxen over the Santa Fe Trail to New Mexico. His team carried a wagon loaded with 6,500 pounds of revolvers and ammunition. Returning to Kansas, in August, 1862, Frank enlisted as a private in Company I of the 2nd Kansas Cavalry. He was in 27 engagements and received

two severe wounds, one through the body and the other through the left arm and hand. In 1865 he received his honorable discharge at Fort Gibson in Indian Territory. He returned to Kansas and built stone fences for the next two years.

In July, 1867, he became a member of the 18th Kansas Cavalry, Company B, commissioned as a second lieutenant. He spent about six months on this campaign. He delivered 1,123 head of cattle to Fort Union, New Mexico, and again he travelled a large part of the Santa Fe Trail. In July, 1867, he was commissioned in the 18th Kansas Cavalry, Company B, as a second lieutenant, serving for 6 months. He delivered 1,123 head of cattle to Fort Union, New Mexico, and again he travelled a large part of the Santa Fe Trail.

Returning to Kansas he resumed building of stone fences. Not long after that he married, raised eight children and then settled down to become a farmer and stock raiser in Shawnee and Osage Counties in Kansas. He served in the Kansas State Legislature and as treasurer of Shawnee County. He moved to Topeka, KS and was appointed chief of police of Topeka in 1900. Frank died in 1937.

To read Frank's account of his second trip over the Santa Fe Trail, visit: http://www.frankstahlbio.net/trail_diary_web.htm